

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 2236

SECDEF: FOR DSAA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, OVIP (AZIZ, GENERAL ABDUL), AF
SUBJECT: FUNDING THE TRAVEL COSTS OF THE CHIEF OF THE AFGHAN
GENERAL STAFF

1. THE EMBASSY IS PLEASED TO LEARN THAT GENERAL ABDUL AZIZ, CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF AFGHANISTAN, IS ON THE LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR THE US ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF'S FY 78 VISITOR PROGRAM. WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR GENERAL AZIZ TO BE EXPOSED TO THIS U.S. PROGRAM. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE AFGHAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT RELIES UPON THE SOVIET UNION FOR ALMOST ALL OF ITS MATERIEL AND FOR MOST OF ITS EXTERNAL TRAINING SUPPORT. AS A RESULT, THE AFGHAN MILITARY IS PROBABLY THAT SEGMENT OF THE AFGHAN SOCIETY WHICH IS MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET PRESSURES AND SUBVERSION. ONE OF OUR PRINCIPAL INTERESTS HERE IS TO REDUCE THIS SUSCEPTIBILITY BY ENCOURAGING THE AFGHANS TO DIVERSIFY THEIR SOURCES OF TRAINING SUPPORT AND TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN TRAINING CAPABILITY. SENDING GENERAL AZIZ TO THE U.S. TO OBSERVE HOW WE TRAIN AT ALL LEVELS, FROM BASIC TRAINING THROUGH SENIOR SERVICE SCHOOLS, WOULD BE A MOST EFFECTIVE WAY AVAILABLE TO PRESENTING THIS KEY MILITARY LEADER WITH A CLEAR IDEA OF A POSSIBLE SYSTEM
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FOR EMULATION BY HIS OWN FORCES.

2. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THE GOA IS CHARACTERISTICALLY MOST RELUCTANT TO SPEND ANY OF ITS OWN BUDGETARY FUNDS FOR SUCH TRAVEL PROGRAMS. IF THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE U.S. ARMY WERE SIMPLY TO INVITE GENERAL AZIZ TO THE U.S., THE AFGHANS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE QUITE PLEASED BY THE GESTURE, BUT THEY

WOULD ALSO BE VERY LIKELY TO TURN DOWN THE OFFER IF THEY DISCERNED THAT THEY WOULD BE EXPECTED TO PAY FOR THE GENERAL'S TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE U.S. WHEN TURNING DOWN THE INVITATION, THE AFGHANS WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO REVEAL THAT THE ISSUE OF TRANSPORTATION COSTS WAS THE REASON. THE DAMAGE WOULD HAVE BEEN DONE, HOWEVER, AND AFGHAN PRIDE POSSIBLY WOULD NOT ALLOW THEM TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS, EVEN IF WE WERE SUBSEQUENTLY TO OFFER TO PAY THESE TRAVEL COSTS. THEREFORE, WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE INITIAL INVITATION CONTAIN AN OFFER TO PAY GENERAL AZIZ'S TRANSPORTATION. THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND SALES MANUAL (MASM) INDICATES IN PART II, CHAPTER E, PARAGRAPH 9.E(1)(B)1 THAT IT IS POSSIBLE, WITH DSAA APPROVAL, TO PAY THE TRANSPORTATION COSTS TO AND FROM THE U.S. WITH INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IMET) FUNDS. IN VIEW OF THE CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SUCH A TRIP, WE MOST STRONGLY URGE THE COURSE OF ACTION OUTLINED ABOVE.

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